

Too late to bring baseball back?

Groups say decision should come by Jan. 1 at the very latest

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Two groups hoping to bring professional baseball back to Ottawa will have to wait until Feb. 1 to find out who'll get to lease the city's baseball stadium on Coventry Road, but by then, it could be too late.

Yesterday, the city's corporate services and economic development committee approved a process to request and evaluate lease deals that would have a professional

baseball team in time for the 2010 season in May.

Ottawa Trolley Company chief executive David Butler partnered with Duncan MacDonald and other community members to form the Ottawa Stadium Group. If they are awarded the lease, OSG would bring a new franchise from the San Ramon, California-based Golden Baseball League.

Ottawa would join Victoria, Calgary and Edmonton with GBL franchises.

However, the OSG had

been hoping a decision on the lease would be made by Jan. 1 at the latest.

"We're ready to move forward now. We have all the elements of our programming in place," said Butler.

MacDonald said it was possible that the decision on the lease would come too late. "What credible league is going to wait that long for a new franchise?"

The other group, Ottawa Professional Baseball led by league commissioner Miles Wolff, would bring a Can-

Am league franchise back to Ottawa. Ottawa Pro was a partner with the Ottawa

Rapidz franchises that folded after its inaugural season in 2008.

The deadline was set for Feb. 1, in order to give any other interested group an opportunity to put a proposal together.

Feb 1. is a tight deadline, but Orleans Coun. Bob Monette said there is enough community support that any group could make it work.

